

**HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
July 25, 2007, 4:30 p.m.
Council Chambers**

PRESENT

Trena Carter
Ian Kohen
Greg Lewis
Gil Palmer
John Roberts
Jason Staley
John Stroh

ABSENT

Tony McClendon
Jay Myers
Akua Ofori-Boateng
Rosalind Pegram

***** Meeting Called to Order *****

STAFF PRESENT:

Director Arlette Tinsley and Secretary, Lula Young

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Secretary Roberts called roll then requested any corrections or changes to the June Minutes.

Commissioner Carter moved to accept the June 27, 2007 Minutes. Commissioner Lewis seconded. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Commissioner Roberts reported the June 27, 2007 Donations Account balance as \$6,130.60. With an annual dinner receipt of fifty dollars, the account balance as of July 23, 2007 is \$6,180.60.

Commissioner Stroh moved to accept the treasurer's report. Commissioner Carter seconded. Motion carried.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

Commissioner Palmer reported that the Bethesda House treatment center had again been denied approval by the Board of Zoning and Appeals.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Director Tinsley advised Commissioners of a new complaint of national origin discrimination in public accommodation complaint that is scheduled. She went on to report that the first mediation of the year is scheduled for August 20, 2007. The mediator will be Merlyn Bartlett, a former commissioner with experience in the health care industry. As this complaint is an

allegation of failure to legally accommodate in a medical facility, his experience will be an asset in the process. Commissioner Lewis will observe, schedule permitting, and be trained on mediations.

After congratulating Commissioner Staley on completing his degree program, Director Tinsley went on to inform Commissioners of the numerous incidents of technical assistance provided in addition to the ongoing work with the NAACP. Director Tinsley advised that she has received a request from the school corporation for technical assistance involving their magnet plan and how to legally enroll students in a magnet plan in light of the recent Supreme Court decision on desegregation involving race. They had planned to use race and socio-economic factors to choose their magnet school students.

Director Tinsley shared her perspective on the recent Summerfest event sponsored by The Indian Association of Columbus. The annual fundraising event, located in Mill Race Park had approximately eight hundred people in attendance. Additional discussion surrounding the dance recital, growth of the South Asian population, cultural differences and the changing culture in Columbus ensued.

Director Tinsley requested Commissioners share the school posting for a half-time BCSC Multicultural Coordinator position with any interested parties and encourage them to apply. It would be great for there to be a person in that job that will be effective for the school corporation.

Commissioner Lewis advised that as he needed to hire a half-time teacher for his department, he would look to see if there is someone that might fill both positions.

The Director briefly touched upon the technical assistance provided to Bethesda House representatives. After acknowledging the recent newspaper article copied for Commissioners, she went on to discuss the reason the Commission had been asked for technical assistance. Director Tinsley outlined State, Federal and Local laws that state, if you are a former drug user or alcoholic you are considered a person with a disability. Discussion ensued.

Director Tinsley requested the support of any available commissioner to attend the budget hearings during staff presentation. She added the request that Commissioners leave their name and cell phone number with staff secretary Young for contact that day in case the hearing time is changed. The director went on to advise Commissioners that by their presence, they show their support of the budget.

Director Tinsley updated Commissioners on the request from Karen Garrity asking for Commission support of BCSC's current anti-bullying billboard ad. Director Tinsley advised that she had received six votes in favor of \$100 and two votes in favor of \$200. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Roberts moved to sponsor Karen Garrity's BCSC Anti-bullying Ad in the amount of \$150.00 for this school year. Commissioner Lewis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Tinsley briefly reviewed the information about the African-American Male National Conference/Indiana Commission on the Social Status of Black Males (AAMNC/ICSSBM). Commissioners were asked if they would like to sponsor any scholarships for interested students to attend. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Stroh moved to provide \$250.00 for ten scholarships to attend the AAMNC Conference. Commissioner Roberts seconded. Motion carried.

ACTION ITEM: WELCOMING COMMUNITY COALITION:

Commissioner John Stroh volunteered to serve as the liaison to the Welcoming Community Coalition.

Commissioner Staley moved to appoint John Stroh as the Commission representative to the Welcoming Community Coalition. Commissioner Carter seconded. Motion carried.

OPEN FORUM: COMMUNITY CONCERNS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Commissioner Roberts provided an overview of the intercultural communications opportunities being planned for middle and high school students through Ivy Tech. He went on to announce a new course that will pair a composition class with the ESL classes at the high schools. The goal is to expose the ESL students to the advantages of continuing education and the Ivy Tech students will learn how difficult it is for them to learn English as a second language as part of the service-learning component. He then shared information about a new course being developed for the spring session, "A Survey of Latino and Hispanic Literature in America in the Twentieth Century." Commissioner Roberts continued to share the goals of the college and went on to announce a new college program for working adults designed to facilitate the completion of a Bachelor's Degree.

Commissioner Roberts announced additional employment opportunities with Ivy Tech State College and requested referrals of potential candidates with an interest in becoming an online instructor and the advantages of being certified by Ivy Tech.

Director Tinsley informed Commissioners that the student being assisted by Deputy Director Smith and Commissioner Pegram had been accepted for admission at every college that he applied to. The next step will be to locate financial aid for him. Commissioner Roberts has agreed to meet with him to assist the student with the financial aid process at Ivy Tech. In documenting the process, Deputy Director Smith has compiled a handbook recording the necessary steps for students that do not have a social security number to apply for college.

Commissioner Palmer provided an update on the current CPD hiring process. He advised that of the three African-American candidates, two are still in the process. One female and one male who was previously with the department and is trying to get back on with CPD.

Commissioner Palmer advised that I.U.P.U.C. is also expanding their faculty. As part of the Diversity Cabinet, their goal is to reflect the diversity of the community. He asked all present to share this information with anyone potentially interested in working for I.U.P.U.C.

LIAISON UPDATE – INTERFAITH FORUM:

Commissioner Lewis advised that there wasn't a July meeting and that he will advise after the August meeting if his schedule allows him to attend.

LEGAL UPDATE:

Director Tinsley advised Commissioners that the Gay Marriage Amendment issue will become heated and her goal is to inform Commissioners about what is going on legally in other states regarding the different arguments that will be made involving the Indiana Constitutional Amendment, Gay Marriage Amendment. Director Tinsley discussed the issue of the impact of how the marriage amendment was used to interpret the domestic violence criminal law in Ohio.

Director Tinsley also gave an update on the U.S. Supreme Court decision that was recently issued regarding the Louisville and Seattle desegregation lawsuits. Director Tinsley discussed how the Supreme Court decision narrowed how schools can use race as a factor in school enrollment.

ADJOURN:

Commissioner Lewis moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Roberts seconded. Meeting adjourned.